

# TIMES AND TRAILS

People, Projects and Priorities at Environment and Conservation

Volume 5, No. 8

2008 Highlights Issue

## *In Vision*

### **Environment and Conservation employees:**

It's a tradition for the department to publish a list of highlights as we close out the year. Many good things happened for Environment and Conservation over the past twelve months. Here's a quick look at a few headlines from some of our [Top Stories for 2008](#):

- ▶ Governor Bredesen selected to receive National Humanitarian Award
- ▶ Largest local recreation grant distribution in Tennessee history
- ▶ Free radon test kits provided to Tennessee families
- ▶ Green Development Conference sparks unique grant partnership
- ▶ Rocky Fork protected with help of the Heritage Conservation Trust Fund
- ▶ Heritage Conservation Trust Fund helps protect more than 4,600 acres with five grants
- ▶ Tennessee Conservationist magazine receives national recognition
- ▶ State employee recycling program wins top EPA WasteWise award

This special year-end issue celebrates the honors, awards and successes achieved by many of our people and programs in 2008. Along with these well-deserved accolades, I appreciate the commitment and hard work of each department employee. From implementing the first phase of the Edison enterprise management system to hosting the 35th national Natural Areas Conference in Nashville, your work made a positive impact for Tennessee and beyond.

Most news outlets had already published their "Top Stories for 2008" before the extraordinary ash slide on December 22 at the TVA Kingston Fossil Plant. Since initial notice of that early morning break at an on-site holding pond, our department has been actively engaged with federal, state and local partners addressing potential impacts to surface waters, solid waste disposal and drinking water supply for the impacted communities. Working through the holidays, department employees from various divisions in the Knoxville Environmental Field Office and Central Office have been essential to an effective, coordinated response. I want to particularly thank the leadership of Deputy Commissioner Paul Sloan and the many department employees who have been instrumental in protecting public health and safety during the initial emergency response and early recovery activities.

This is a historic environmental disaster for Tennessee. While the road to recovery for citizens, water quality and aquatic habitat in these communities will likely be long and difficult, the department is committed to a full, complete cleanup for the region. Our work supports Governor Bredesen's expectation for TVA to fulfill its pledge to take all appropriate actions to assist those affected and to clean up and restore damaged property.

I know 2009 will be full of challenges and opportunities, but I am confident we will rise to the occasion. Best wishes to you and your family for a happy and healthy New Year.



## 2008 Achievements for Environment and Conservation

### Technologies

#### Waterlog

The department developed a homegrown information system called Waterlog that makes all Water Pollution Control related data electronically available to division employees. The new database also has the potential to save the department and division millions of dollars when successfully implemented throughout the department's other programs. This data management approach has already been employed in the development of an enforcement tracking system supported by all of the department's regulatory divisions and the Office of General Counsel. In July 2008, the State Employees Suggestion Award Program Board made the unanimous decision to present a \$10,000 award to Vojin Janjic, Water Pollution Control, and David Brewer, Information Systems Division, for their instrumental work in creating this new, integrated information database for the department.



(l-r) Garland Wiggins, WPC Assistant Director; David Brewer, ISD; Deputy Commissioner Paul Sloan; Vojin Janjic, Division of Water Pollution Control; and Paul Davis, WPC Director.

#### Online Enforcement Database

Environment and Conservation seeks to maximize compliance by providing increased access to timely public information about our enforcement activities. In 2008, the department developed an online application that enables the public to search our enforcement database across all divisions. Individuals can query the database by type of enforcement action and variety of other search criteria, including site location, county, action status, involved party and TDEC regulatory division. This searchable database at [www.tn.gov/environment/enforcement](http://www.tn.gov/environment/enforcement) is a valuable public information tool for citizens and will contribute to better environmental performance in Tennessee.

### Milestone Cleanups

#### Department Responds to Deadly February Tornadoes

Soon after violent supercell storms raked across Tennessee on February 5, department staff was at work responding to communities affected by this extraordinary weather. This included immediate emergency response, follow-up debris disposal activities and specific environmental issues such as the Columbia Gulf pipeline fire in Trousdale County. The department supported a unified command established for debris removal in the hardest hit areas of Macon and Sumner County. Department staff participating in the emergency response efforts included Nick Fielder, TDEC liaison to TEMA; Roger Donovan, SWM Central Office; Robert Brawner, APC Central Office; Daniel Roop, Nashville EFO - SWM; Barry Atnip, Cookeville EFO - SWM; Jeff Cales, Cookeville EFO - APC; Bob Alexander, WPC Central Office; Jeff Bagwell, Water Supply Central Office; Pam Myers, WPC Central Office. Numerous Tennessee families were impacted by these violent supercell storms, and our department family was not spared. Deidre Warner, Division of Underground Storage Tanks in the Central Office, experienced



Daniel Roop, Nashville EFO - Solid Waste Management, at tornado debris staging and processing site in Macon County following February's violent weather.

## Times and Trails

great loss from a tornado that struck the Castalian Springs community in Sumner County. Her husband Dallas was killed, her house destroyed and she was hospitalized with a collapsed lung, broken ribs, cuts and bruises at Sumner Regional Medical Center. Walter Abels, retired maintenance worker from Pickwick Landing State Park, was killed by tornadoes that struck his home in Hardin County. UST staff rallied relief assistance and support for Diedre and her family.

## Enterprise South

One of the most significant brownfield redevelopment success stories in recent U.S. history is the cleanup and restoration of the former Volunteer Army Ammunition Plant site in north Hamilton County. Tremendous coordination between TDEC, EPA, US Corps of Engineers, US Army and local government led to an optimal and effective cleanup at this site – now known as Enterprise South. The result of this work made Enterprise South ready when Volkswagen's selected Chattanooga as the site for its \$1 billion investment and first new auto assembly production plant in the U.S. since the 1980s.

## Henry Horton Skeet and Trap Range

In June, the Friends of Henry Horton arranged to have 40 years of lead shot removed from the park's Trap and Skeet Range. Using a "dry method" of lead harvesting to avoid toxic water runoff from the lead shot leaching into ground water and local waterways, this two-week process yielded more than 100 tons of lead shot for recycling. The Friends will use more than \$30,000 generated from the sale of this recycled lead to expand and improve the [Trap and Skeet Range at Henry Horton](#).

## Cumberland Trail in Hamilton Co.

In late 2007, Environment and Conservation was alerted to a large amount of waste illegally dumped in the Little Soddy Creek area of Hamilton County that is part of the northern boundary of [Cumberland Trail State Park](#). Investigators from the department's Chattanooga field office confirmed a significant amount of tires, construction debris and household garbage had been dumped into the gorge and onto the trail below from seven pull-off sites along a nearby road. A plan was soon developed to remove these items in order to prevent waste from eventually entering the creek below. The first phase of the cleanup involved removal of nine drums of paint waste with high lead concentrations. The second phase involved removal of used tires, appliances, garbage and other debris. The site terrain presented unique challenges for the removal process due to the steep slope and wide debris field. Contractors and Hamilton County highway department employees assisted the department in executing a labor intensive plan that removed material a few pieces at a time from the gorge using a crane located on the road above. During the three-week operation, wastes were removed then segregated by type and handling method. Total cleanup included: 1,052 tires taken to the Hamilton County recycling facility; four roll-off dumpsters and eight dump trucks of scrap metal recycled in Chattanooga; and 20 dump truck loads taken to a demolition landfill in Hamilton County.

## People, Projects and Priorities



*Commissioner Fyke and Nancy Boisvert, Division of Remediation, with local government's appreciation of restoration accomplishments at Enterprise South.*



*Drums of reclaimed lead shot from the Skeet and Trap Range at Henry Horton*



*An old boat was one of many items hoisted out of the ravine.*



### Harpeth River Watershed Initiative

The department signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Williamson County and the City of Franklin outlining mutual interest in developing an inventory of projects that have potential to improve, remediate or protect the Harpeth River Watershed. This agreement is the first of its kind in Tennessee and produced a number of positive outcomes in 2008. Carnton Creek, at the Eastern Flank Battlefield in Franklin, was selected as the first site for an enhancement project. Impoundments were removed, riparian buffer zones established and flow increased. The project was completed and dedicated on November 21. A process is now established by which future restoration sites can be recommended and evaluated. Selection criteria have been established and a mechanism for nomination, consideration and enhancement has been developed. The program description was placed on line on the City of Franklin [web site](#).

### Ash slide at TVA Kingston Fossil Plant

Early morning on December 22 a retaining wall failed at the TVA Kingston Fossil Plant in Roane County. More than 5.4 million cubic yards of coal ash spilled from an on-site holding pond to cover more than 300 acres of surrounding land and water. While there were no immediate injuries caused by this extraordinary ash slide, the area's physical and natural environment has been dramatically impacted by this spill. The department has been actively engaged in this situation since it happened. Staff from the Knoxville Environmental Field Office and Central Office have been on-site at the TVA Kingston Fossil Plant as part of a coordinated effort to contain the immediate threat to human health and the environment. Activities have included sampling and analysis for public drinking water systems to assess whether the raw water entering and the finished water produced by the Kingston Water Treatment Plant meets public health standards. All samples received to date indicate water entering this plant meets public health standards.

Our work includes ongoing water quality monitoring and assessment within the major waterways impacted by the ash slide – Emory River, Clinch River and Tennessee River. We also consulted with the Tennessee Department of Health to provide public health guidance and recommended precautions for citizens that come in contact with coal ash. As attention is now focused on timely cleanup and safe disposal of recovered coal ash from the spill, the department is encouraged by TVA's promise of full and complete clean up for these communities. As part of this recovery strategy, TDEC has developed an independent, comprehensive sampling plan to address surface water, ground water, drinking water, soil and air monitoring to better inform communities and citizens while ensuring full, complete cleanup.



*Deputy Commissioner Paul Sloan addresses crowd at Franklin's Eastern Flank Battlefield Park.*



*On Dec. 22 a retaining wall failed at the TVA Kingston Fossil Plant in Roane County releasing more than 5.4 million cubic yards of coal ash from an on-site holding pond to surrounding land and waterways. TDEC is actively overseeing timely cleanup and safe disposal of recovered coal ash from the spill while also developing a comprehensive environmental monitoring plan to better inform citizens while ensuring full, complete cleanup.*

### Honors and Awards (People)

**Candi Overstreet**, Jackson Environmental Field Office - Solid Waste Management, received an Award of Distinction from the Department of Defense for her outstanding work with hazardous waste management and cleanup efforts at the Milan Army Ammunition Plant.

**Debbie Arnwine**, biologist in Planning and Standards section of Water Pollution Control, was named 2008 State Biologist of the Year by EPA Region IV.

**Jennifer Dodd**, Water Pollution Control's state pre-treatment coordinator, received the Water Environment Federation's 2008 Bedell Award to acknowledge extraordinary personal service. Previous Bedell Award winners from TDEC include Bob O'Dette in 1986 and Paul Estill Davis in 1993.

**Bob Richards**, Tennessee Greenways and Trails Coordinator, received the 2008 State Trail Worker of the Year Award for Tennessee at the National Trails Symposium.

**Marty Silver**, Warriors' Path Interpretive Specialist, received the Tennessee Environmental Education Association's Distinguished Service Award, its highest honor, during the 2008 annual TEEA Conference this fall.

**April Welch**, East Tennessee Regional Interpretive Specialist, was named Ranger of the Year by the Tennessee Park Rangers Association and Tennessee State Parks. This award goes to the ranger who most embodies the mission of Tennessee State Parks and the Ranger association during the previous year.

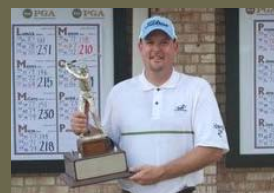
**Kelvin Burgin**, Head Golf Pro from the Bear Trace at Cumberland Mountain, claimed his third consecutive PGA Section Championship title in August at Old Hickory Country Club.



*Debbie Arnwine and WPC Director Paul Davis.*



*Ranger Marty Silver and TEEA representatives.*



*Kevin Burgin, Head Golf Pro from the Bear Trace at Cumberland Mountain.*

### Honors and Awards (Programs)

**Tennessee's State Employee Recycling Program (SERP)** received the EPA WasteWise Partner of the Year Award for the 6th consecutive year for most outstanding state employee recycling program.

**The Division of Water Pollution Control** received an award from the U.S. EPA during the Kentucky/Tennessee **Green Development Conference** in February for national leadership in integrated reporting through the EPA Assessment Database. EPA recognized Tennessee's water quality data is some of the best in the nation. The database is designed to track water quality assessment data, including information on whether rivers, streams and lakes are meeting their classified uses for things such as recreation and drinking water, as well as the causes and sources of stream impairments. Effective use of the database also helps the department more efficiently prepare water quality reports as required by the federal Clean Water Act.

**The Tennessee Conservationist** won the 2008 Outstanding Media Award from American Trails at the National Trails Symposium for its coverage of trails and trail work across the state. This national award also reflects outstanding growth



*Deputy Commissioner Paul Sloan, Environmental Assistance Director Lori Munkeboe, SERP Coordinator George Kesterson and Commissioner Jim Fyke with the 2008 EPA WasteWise State Partner of the Year Award.*

## Times and Trails

at the magazine over the past few years. Since 2004, *The Tennessee Conservationist* has nearly doubled its number of subscribers from 9,000 to more than 17,800.

**Bear Trace Golf Course at Harrison Bay State Park** was designated as a Certified Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary by Audubon International. **Harrison Bay** is the seventh course in Tennessee and the second within the Tennessee State Parks system to receive this honor; **Paris Landing State Park** achieved Audubon certification in 2004.



(l-r): EPA Assistant Administrator for Water Ben Grumbles, Water Pollution Control GIS coordinator Rich Cochran, Water Pollution Control Director Paul Davis, Deputy Commissioner Paul Sloan and Commissioner Jim Fyke.



TDEC Attorney Fran Wallas, TCM Editor Louise Zepp and Commissioner Fyke display the magazine's American Trails 2008 Outstanding Media Award.



Paul Carter, golf course superintendent at Harrison Bay, led the effort to obtain sanctuary status and was recognized for environmental stewardship by Audubon International.

## Highlights in Water Resources

Our water quality data continues to get sharper and more accessible. TDEC has completed all sampling for a key Wadeable Streams Assessment. We now have digitized our data analysis of high quality streams in Tennessee into a GIS database that provides a more detailed view of water quality across the state.

TDEC and the Department of Transportation partnered to locate green **watershed signs** at various points of entry to 55 watersheds throughout Tennessee in March 2008. The watershed names used on the signs reflect those used by our Water Pollution Control staff in its watershed management system and are consistent with the naming system utilized by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and dozens of watershed organizations across the state. Typically, these names are based on the main feature in the watershed to provide more precise information and to avoid confusion. These signs reinforce the department's watershed management approach. Our biologists and environmental specialists are continually collecting, analyzing and interpreting water data in order to determine the quality of the state's waters and inform our citizens of the progress being made to improve Tennessee's water resources. This program has increased awareness and discussion among Tennesseans about our watersheds as the driving public has noticed these watershed signs. Many citizens are learning a watershed is the entire land area that drains into a lake, river or other water body. They are learning if you want to protect the water supply, first you protect the land.

Learn more about watershed signs at [www.tn.gov/environment/watershedsigns](http://www.tn.gov/environment/watershedsigns). This site features maps, posters, brochures and tips for protecting water quality helpful for promoting healthy watersheds and clean water to individuals and groups.



Lower Tennessee River watershed sign reinforces a clean water message for drivers traveling east bound on I-40 in Decatur County.



## Times and Trails

## People, Projects and Priorities

The department is utilizing an EPA Innovation Grant to evaluate and deploy initiatives that help local programs improve compliance and performance regarding storm water systems. The grant has supported outreach to Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4) across Tennessee and establishment of the Tennessee Qualified Local Program Advisory Committee that local government and utility officials from 17 different MS4s and representatives from various stakeholder groups. Another component of the EPA Innovation grant was the formation of a statewide Tennessee Stormwater Association for MS4s. The first annual statewide Tennessee Stormwater Association conference was held in October 2008 and this Association will provide MS4s with a forum to share ideas, questions, and knowledge.

TDEC partnered with TDOT, TVA, and the Tennessee Stormwater Association to offer a Green Infrastructure Grant program designed to help local governments fund green infrastructure and low-impact development projects. Grants ranging from \$10,000 to \$30,000 were awarded to local governments through a competitive process for projects including rain gardens, green roofs, pervious concrete applications, tree boxes, as well as outreach and education efforts designed to promote green development in Tennessee communities. Seventeen green development applications were received from across the state representing small towns and major metropolitan areas. The following four projects were funded from this year's solicitation: City of Lakeland, City of Knoxville, City of Athens and City of Nashville..

As sediment continues to be the leading source of water pollution in Tennessee, the department is currently revising and updating existing Erosion Prevention and Sediment Control manuals and training courses. New training courses are being developed to provide guidance on storm water management and on the latest design tools.

The City of Spencer successfully completed a decade-long effort to deal with treated wastewater from its sewage treatment plant. Since 1999, the department has worked to find a satisfactory solution for the treatment and disposal of wastewater from Spencer. The city desperately needed centralized wastewater collection and treatment. Septic tank failures resulted in raw sewage rising to the ground surface routinely throughout the city posing significant human health and environmental hazards. Through efforts of many state, county and local officials, an innovative plan was eventually conceived that called for discharge of treated wastewater to bio-infiltration ponds and a constructed wetlands completed earlier this year. With this current configuration, any discharge to the Caney Fork River would only occur due to emergency conditions.

More than 98 percent of Tennessee citizens receiving public drinking water are served by public drinking water system meeting all the federal requirements – one of the highest rates in the United States. EPA has recognized our performance and recommended Tennessee's public drinking water and source water protection programs as models for other states to benchmark and emulate.

In 2008, TDEC continues to help communities improve their drinking water and wastewater treatment services:

- ▶ Tennessee awarded more than \$114 million to local governments from the [Clean Water State Revolving Fund](#).
- ▶ Tennessee awarded more than \$8 million in funds from the [Drinking Water State Revolving Fund](#) to improve local drinking water treatment facilities.



*Patrick Parker, Water Pollution Control; Joe Sanders, General Counsel; John Noel, Tennessee Conservation Voters; Sohnia Hong, Office of the Attorney General; Ronnie Bowers, Bureau of Environment and Deputy Commissioner Paul Sloan in front of the new bio-infiltration ponds and wetlands for Spencer's wastewater treatment system.*

## Times and Trails

This year TDEC adopted a two-year, \$2 million per year pilot program in the Clean Water State Revolving Fund that considers watershed enhancement activities as part of the traditional projects that are reviewed, evaluated and approved for CWSRF loans. This innovative pilot program presents an opportunity for local governments to incorporate a variety of watershed enhancement activities at no additional cost while they also access the Clean Water SRF to invest in critical infrastructure for their communities. A watershed enhancement project may include zoning that demonstrates the preservation of green space, addition of riparian buffer zones of at least 150 feet as part of a larger CWSRF proposal, or other low-impact development project that helps keep runoff pollution out of rivers and streams.

The Division of Ground Water Protection has partnered this year with the Department's Office of Environmental Assistance to provide consultation and free home test kits for radon gas. Many GWP environmental specialists across the state have received national certification regarding radon and now take advantage of their local staffing presence and frequent business interactions with homeowners and homebuilders to consult with their community on radon.

## People, Projects and Priorities

### Highlights in Land Resources

Environment and Conservation's Office of Environmental Assistance (OEA) accepted an award on April 10 from U.S. EPA for joining the National Partnership for Environmental Priorities (NPEP). The National Partnership for Environmental Priorities (NPEP) program encourages public and private organizations to form voluntary partnerships with EPA to reduce the use or release of any of their 31 Priority Chemicals. OEA has agreed to reduce mercury and formaldehyde in the state of Tennessee. While formaldehyde is not one of the priority chemicals on the EPA priority chemical list, OEA feels that it is an important chemical to remove from our schools and our state. OEA will reduce these chemicals through the School Chemical Cleanout Campaign (SC3) and Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) events that occur throughout the year across the state.

The department began the **old-closed landfill initiative**. Selected closed landfills were investigated for nearby land and groundwater uses and sampling was initiated.

In spring 2008, Anderson County, Shelby County and the City of Chattanooga were awarded **EPA Brownfield Grant** funding totaling \$947,000 to conduct assessments or cleanup in their communities. Division of Remediation personnel conducted various educational opportunities during 2008 to increase successful identification and pursuit of grant awards for Tennessee:

- ▶ More than 90 people attended EPA Brownfield Grant workshops focused on conducting assessment and cleanup at Brownfields properties in their communities. For 2008, nine different Tennessee communities submitted proposals to EPA for grants totaling \$5.1 million dollars that will be announced in spring 2009.
- ▶ Approximately 400 drycleaner personnel were trained in TDEC rules relevant to drycleaners including Air Pollution Control, Hazardous Waste, and [Drycleaner Environmental Response Program](#) regulations. Compliance with these regulations will reduce environmental impacts from drycleaning operations as well as reduce enforcement actions and monetary fines levied against drycleaners.
- ▶ Brownfield funding is currently assisting with active cleanup plans for Nashville, Memphis and Chattanooga. These projects are converting former blighted properties into industrial, office, retail and residential units. In Memphis, the Memphis Housing Authority is completing cleanup activities on 3 different properties that will result in new affordable housing units for citizens of Memphis. In Chattanooga, personnel were involved with the effort to attract Volkswagen to the Enterprise South property and there is also an ongoing cleanup of a former 52 acre foundry along I-24 that is planned for mixed commercial and residential use.



(l-r) Kenneth Lapierre; US EPA Deputy Director, RCRA Division, Ken Nafe; OEA, Kathy Glapa; OEA.



### Highlights in Air Resources

Years of hard work have paid off in the form of attaining the 1997 Eight Hour Ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standard earlier than required by federal regulations. Because of a pledge of early voluntary actions to reduce ozone levels by December 31, 2007 – 18 months earlier than the June 15, 2009 deadline – EPA deferred the effective date of nonattainment designations for Davidson, Sumner, Rutherford, Wilson and Williamson Counties in Middle Tennessee; Hamilton and Meigs in the Greater Chattanooga area of Tennessee; and Sullivan and Hawkins Counties in the Tri-Cities area of Upper East Tennessee.

Because of their efforts to control air pollution early and the efforts of TDEC-APC to prepare an acceptable State Implementation Plan, these counties were formally declared attainment for the 1997 Eight Hour National Ambient Air Quality Standard for Ozone. The final designation was announced in the April 2, 2008 Federal Register and may be viewed at: <http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2008/pdf/E8-6825.pdf>.

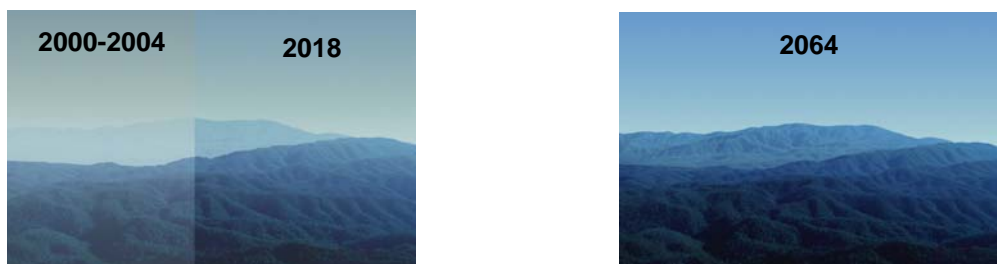
The department completed two State Implementation Plans in 2008:

#### Greater Knoxville Area Annual Fine Particle Standard SIP

East Tennessee counties of Knox, Anderson, Blount, Loudon and a portion of Roane County that encompasses the TVA Kingston Steam Plant have been designated nonattainment for the 15  $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$  fine particle National Ambient Air Quality Standard. TDEC has prepared a plan to timely return the area to attainment. The plan relies upon reductions of sulfur dioxide from controls being installed at the TVA Bull Run Steam Plant in Anderson County and from lowering the sulfur content in gasoline and diesel fuel. Controls are also being installed at the TVA Kingston Steam Plant in Roane County as a contingency measure should the controls in Anderson County fail to bring the area into attainment on time.

#### Regional Haze SIP

Tennessee worked with nine other Southeastern states to develop its regional haze state implementation plan. The plan was submitted to EPA in April 2008 and requires the state of Tennessee to do its part in restoring visibility levels in Class I Areas, such as the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, to those levels that would be experienced prior to the Americanization of the North American continent. The initial centerpiece of the strategy will be significant reductions in sulfur dioxide emissions from coal-fired electric utility boilers and large, coal-fired industrial boilers.



*Computer simulated images of Look Rock in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park are shown here to illustrate some of the milestones.*

In later years, the focus will move to the transportation sector and improvements in energy efficiency to use less fossil fuel. As might be expected, this is going to take a long time to achieve: there are ten-year milestones with final one being reached in 2064.

#### Nuclear Regulatory Commission Review

The U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) conducts periodic reviews of Agreement State programs to ensure that public health and safety are adequately protected from the potential hazards associated with the use of radioactive materials, and that Agreement State programs are compatible with the NRC's program. The NRC conducted a review of the department's Radiological Health program during the period of April to June 2008. The review team found that the program was compatible with the NRC's program and adequate to protect the public health and safety. With this finding, the NRC recommended that the next review take place in four years.

## Highlights in State Parks and Conservation

**Panther Creek State Park** developed and constructed a major overlook as a cooperative effort by Park staff, the Friends of Panther Creek and UT School of Architecture. This project used little if any state funds with primary funding coming through efforts of the Friends group. Design, planning, and some of the construction labor was provided by instructors and students of the UT School of Architecture as a class project.

**The All Taxa Biological Inventory** (ATBI) continues to collect data at 36 parks across the state. Tennessee is still the only state in the nation that is collecting this type of information on lands help by Tennessee State Parks. In development is a web-accessible database from which interested persons will be able to see which taxa have been identified in the state parks and in which park they can be found. This database will be accessible in the near future at [www.state.tn.us/environment/parks/atbi/](http://www.state.tn.us/environment/parks/atbi/).

Environment and Conservation drew upon the biological diversity of Middle Tennessee to host for the **35th Natural Areas Conference** on October 14-17 in Nashville. More than 450 attendees from all 50 states and six countries came to Nashville for this important national conference.

Significant land acquisitions were made for the department through partnerships with the Heritage Conservation Trust Fund, Conservation Fund, Civil War Battlefield Protection, and US Fish and Wildlife Service. These acquisition projects protected land at Rocky Fork, Davis Bridge, Virgin Falls, and put under state ownership the highly used Fiery Grizzard Hiking Trails at South Cumberland State Park.



(l-r) Brian Bowen, Natural Areas Conference chair; Hal DeSelm and Elsie Quarterman, recipients of the George B. Fell Lifetime Achievement Award; Gary Milano, Becker Award winner; and Kim Herman, Natural Areas Association President.

City of Sweetwater received \$125,000 LPRF grant in September. (l-r) Commissioner Jim Fyke, State Senator Randy McNally, Governor Phil Bredesen, City Commissioner James Matony, State Representative Jimmy Matlock and Parks Director Greg Norman.

Tennessee State Parks hosted more than 30 million visitors in 2008. Park staff presented more than 17,000 interpretive programs to nearly 700,000 participants.

Tennessee State Parks added over 29,900 acres of parkland to its total acreage during the past year. This major accomplishment was made possible by acquisitions through the

**Recreation Education Services** implemented a pre-application process with the Local Parks and Recreation Fund (LPRF) and Recreational Trails Program (RTP) for the first time and resulted in LPRF and RTP grants of nearly \$12 million for 87 projects, the largest amount of funds ever awarded from these programs.



## Times and Trails

## People, Projects and Priorities

In July 2008, the **Heritage Conservation Trust Fund** awarded 5 grants protecting more than 4,600 acres totaling \$2.3 million. With these 2008 grants, the Heritage Conservation Trust Fund has approved more than \$30 million dollars in grants to leverage \$117,609,000 in conservation purchases to protect approximately 42,600 acres of priority land in Tennessee.

A highlight project was the Trust Fund's contribution of \$6 million toward the acquisition of the **Rocky Fork** tract – the largest unprotected tract in the Southern Appalachians. The Trust Fund partnered with the Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy, The Conservation Fund, the United States Forest Service, and other private donors to conserve this 10,000 acres of backcountry in Unicoi and Greene counties.

The tornado damage of February 2008 was the AP's Top Story in Tennessee for 2008. An F3 strength tornado passing through the southeast corner of Sumner County on February 5, 2008 did significant damage to the state-owned historic site **Wynnewood** and prehistoric **Castalian Springs Mounds** sites. The tornado made a direct hit on the main dwelling, and every out building at Wynnewood was either demolished or structurally compromised. The site's historic landscape was even more devastated than the buildings. In the immediate aftermath of the tornado, tremendous efforts were made to recover many of the historic sites furnishings and artifacts that were scattered to the wind. Many of the original items in the house were recovered thanks to the fantastic response and hard work of volunteers and rangers from Tennessee State Parks.

**The 2008 State Recreation Map** was completed and identifies all the public lands available for recreation across the state held by the various federal and state agencies.



*Recreation Education Services Director Mark Tummons and Commissioner Fyke present 2008 Tennessee Recreation Map at meeting of the Conservation Commission in Nashville.*



*Ranger Jeremy Vaden, Burgess Falls State Park, surveys the damage to Wynnewood.*

### State Employees Get 50% Discount on State Parks' Inn Rooms and Cabins

Now through March 31, State employees, county and city public school teachers, State university and State community college employees, Tennessee National Guard, retired full-time state employees and active duty military, are eligible for a 50% discount on inn rooms and cabins at Tennessee State Parks. [Click here for more information.](#)

*Times and Trails* is published monthly by the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation.

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